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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Yugoslavia

SUBJECT International Labor Battalions in Yugoslavia

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SUPPLEMENT

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There are 28 international labor battalions collaborating in the "voluntary" work of constructing the Samac-Sarajevo Youth railroad. The total membership of these 28 brigades is 4,500 "youths", ranging in age from 25 to 60.

1. The Albanian Brigade - During May 1947, the Albanian Youth Brigade, Kemal Stafa, arrived. It is made up of 257 Communists of whom over 150 have been enrolled in clandestine semi-military camps where they have been instructed in guerrilla warfare.

2. The Greek Brigades

a. There are three Greek brigades. The first is called the EPON; the second, the Georgios Siantos; and the name of the third is not known. They have a total strength of 450 men. One (or more) of the brigades is located in a camp near the town of Doboj in the vicinity of the Samac-Sarajevo railroad. In September the total group of Greek guerrillas was to be sent to Greece after having completed their instruction.

b. The Giorgi Litzados (sic) Greek work brigade has participated in the construction of the railroad, and has three times received the special designation "udarna", (shock). It has returned to the military camp of Buljkes, where it had been organized six months prior and is now a military formation trained for guerrilla warfare. The brigade consists of 600 men and 80 women. In addition, 15 members of the British brigades travel with this unit. They will, however, remain in Yugoslavia.

3. The French Brigades

a. At the end of July and the beginning of August, three French brigades arrived, made up of over 500 men, all French Communist workers. It was reported that on 7 August 400 Frenchmen arrived.

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Comment: These items may refer to the same group of men.

It has also been learned that the French General Confederation of Labor has sent a group of men to Yugoslavia assigned to "study the work of the youth railway".

CLASSIFICATION

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This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 13 October 1973 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.
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- b. The third French labor brigade participated in the construction of the Samac-Sarajevo railroad for only twelve days and is now in Belgrade waiting to be repatriated to France. Of the 253 members of this brigade who arrived in Yugoslavia, only 112 members are returning; the remainder are slated to go to the military camp at Buljkes.
4. The Italian Brigades - In the military camp of Bor (Serbia) an Italian brigade is being organized. It already has the strength of 450 volunteers, part of whom have been enrolled in Italy by Tito agents. Some were members of the workers brigade participating in the construction of the Youth railroad; others are Italian war prisoners who have officially declared that they do not wish to return to Italy, and the remainder are Italian workers who up to now have been laboring in the Zenica mines in Bosnia.
5. The Istrian Brigades
 - a. The Lino Mariani labor brigade of Pola is made up of 210 Communists from that city. It left Pola on 1 August, destined to work on the construction of the Youth railroad.
 - b. The members of the First Alma Vivova Trieste labor brigade were repatriated to Trieste, and only 80 of the members have returned. The Yugoslav authorities have given assurances that its members are now taking study courses in Yugoslavia and that its members have stated that they preferred to remain in Yugoslavia rather than to return to Trieste.
 - c. The Second, Fratelli Petracco, Trieste labor brigade, and the First Trieste brigade, together total 362 men. The Second brigade has twice been proclaimed udarna for the work it has accomplished in the construction of the Youth railroad.
 - d. The Third, Vojka Smis, is composed of over 400 pro-Tito youth and young members of the UAIS residing in Trieste and in the other towns which are included in the Free Territory of Trieste. They left for Yugoslavia on 1 August.
6. The British Brigades - The First and Second British Brigades and other groups of the young British work units total 178 men. The "vacations" of these groups to Yugoslavia were organized by the British-Yugoslav Committee in London and the British National Student Union.
7. The Czechoslovak Brigades -
 - a. On 11 August the recent arrival of a Czechoslovak Youth brigade of 170 members was reported.
 - b. At the end of July the arrival of a Czechoslovak Youth brigade that had been organized by the Union of the Friends of Tito Yugoslavia was reported.
 - c. At the beginning of August, the Second Czechoslovak brigade arrived.
8. The Austrian Brigades - On 11 August, it was reported that 140 members of the Youth Organization of Free Austria arrived to work on the railroad.
9. The Polish Brigades - In July the First Polish labor brigade, the General Walter, made up of 170 members arrived in Yugoslavia. Over 100 of them are members of Polish military organizations.
10. The Hungarian Brigades
 - a. In June 1947, the First Hungarian brigade, the Petöfi Sándor, arrived.
 - b. In July the Second Hungarian brigade, the Vasvári, arrived in Yugoslavia to work on the railroad. The two brigades number 370 men.

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c. The arrival of two other Hungarian brigades totaling 250 men each is expected.

11. The Rumanian Brigades - The total strength of the First through Sixth brigades set forth below is 700 men.

- a. The First Rumanian shock labor brigade is known as the Stefan Flavac.
- b. The Second Rumanian shock labor brigade is known as the Zarko Despotovic.
- c. The Third Rumanian shock labor brigade is known as the Nicolae Volescu
- d. The Fourth Rumanian shock labor brigade is made up of students.
- e. The Fifth Rumanian shock labor brigade is made up of young workers.
- f. The Sixth Rumanian shock labor brigade is made up of Yugoslavs living in Rumania.

On 11 August it was reported that out of 103 members, of both sexes, of the Rumanian Youth brigade, over 60 have disappeared.

12. The Bulgarian Brigades

- a. The First Georgi Dimitrov brigade, made up of laborers and peasants, has been working on the Youth railroad since the beginning of July 1947.
- b. The Second Bulgarian brigade arrived in Yugoslavia at the end of July. It is made up of Yugoslavs living in Bulgaria.

13. The Swiss Brigades - At the beginning of July 1947 a brigade of unknown strength, consisting of young Swiss workers and students has been working on the Youth railroad.

14. The Norwegian Brigade - The First Norwegian shock labor brigade is made up of 27 men headed by the journalist Ojsten Ostenstand.

15. The Danish Brigades -

- a. The First Danish brigade arrived in June 1947, and is made up of students.
- b. The Second Danish Youth brigade is made up of 99 members headed by Slaf Olsen. The brigade is divided into five groups.
- c. The Third Danish brigade arrived in August 1947.

There is a total of 345 Danes in these three brigades. Both the Danish brigades and the Norwegian brigades stopped a few days in Trieste before proceeding to Yugoslavia.

16. The Swedish Brigades - The First Swedish brigade arrived in June 1947. There is a total of 153 Swedes in the brigades working on the Youth railroad.

17. Westphalia, Canada, Australia, Palestine, Belgium, and other countries have contributed small groups totaling 350 persons.

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